On the Occasion of the
Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the
Repose of the Ever-Memorable Elder
Philotheos (Zervakos) (†1980)



Biography of The Venerable Elder of Paros, Archimandrite Philotheos (Zervakos)

(1884 – 1980)

The venerable Elder Philotheos was born in 1884, in the village of Pakia, near the small market town of Molaoi in Laconia.

His pious and God-fearing parents, Panagiotis and Ekaterina, named the boy Constantine at Holy Baptism.

From his early youth, Constantine loved the Church, chanting—he had a beautiful voice—, and the reading of spiritually edifying books, and very soon Divine Grace *visited* him, as he underwent the *blessed change.* From that time on, he was vouchsafed various *signs* and was under the special protection of the Theotokos and the Saints.

The young Constantine was so fond of learning and was so industrious that, after his basic education, he became a teacher at just seventeen years of age. He was given a position in the village of Phinikion, in his homeland, where he was distinguished for his love of his students.

In 1905, he was conscripted into the army. Since he had resolved to dedicate himself to Christ the Heavenly King, he refused to go to France for higher military studies, as his Commander had suggested to him.



When, in 1907, he had fulfilled his military duties, he attempted to go to the Holy Mountain to dedicate himself to Christ as a monk. But, by the Providence of God, his plans did not succeed. At the advice of his spiritual Father, St. Nectarios of Pentapolis (+9 November 1920), who was at that time Director of the Rizareios Theological School in Athens, he went to the island of Paros and entered the monastic life at the historic Monastery of the Life-Giving Spring of Longovarda, which was renowned as a good Coenobium, with order, unity of spirit, and asceticism.



In December of 1907, he was tonsured to the Great Schema, receiving the name of Philotheos, and was Ordained a Deacon. In 1912, he was Ordained a Hieromonk and, in 1913, was appointed as Archimandrite and Confessor.

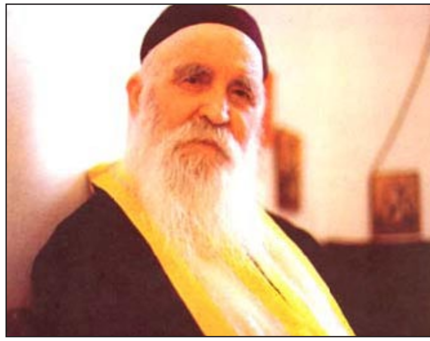
From that time on—and, especially, from 1916—, his extensive missionary work began: he would repeatedly make tours through many parts of Greece, where he would preach and hear confessions.



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In 1930, at the age of forty-six, and against his will, he was established as Abbot of the Monastery of Longovarda, but he did not cease his

multifarious missionary work. At the same time, he devoted himself to extensive renovations of the monastery buildings.



He likewise founded several churches in Paros, as well as the Convent of the *Panagia Myrtidiotissa* in Thapsana, where he spent the last ten years of his holy life (1970-1980).

At the convent in Thapsana, apart from other things, he built a chapel in honor of his Confessor, St. Nectarios of Aegina, alongside of which he had prepared his tomb, where he was buried on 26 April/9 May 1980. The removal of his holy Relics took place thirteen years later, on 11/24 September 1993.

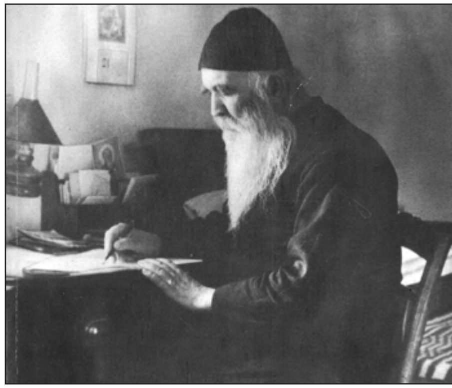
In mind, morals, and life, the Elder was literally *Patristic*; that is why our Lord has performed many signs and miracles through him, both while he was still alive and after his saintly repose (25 April/8 May 1980).



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Elder Philotheos of Paros was particularly distinguished for his philanthropic activities and proved to be the guardian angel of the island of Paros, and in particular during the German occupation. He was also distinguished as an eloquent preacher and Divinely-inspired Confessor; innumerable souls having been saved through him by means of repentance and confession. He was marked by asceticism, constant prayer, a sense of compulsion in things spiritual, watchfulness and sobriety, profound humil-

ity and meekness, compunction, thirst for the Mystery of Holy Communion, the reading of sacred texts, philanthropy, sweetness, and compassion.



He was aflame with love for God and the prophetical zeal for His Holy Name and our Holy Orthodox Faith, on account of which he did not tolerate modernisms and innovations, which he would battle against in writing and verbally, thereby showing himself to be a sturdy defender of Holy Tradition.

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The Venerable Elder of Paros also wrote the following edifying books, the majority of which were composed, as he himself confesses, *"at night, by the light of a lamp"*:

1) **Service, Miracles, and Commentary on the Life-Giving Spring** *(two editions)*
2) **Service, Miracles, and Commentary on All Saints**
3) **Life, Service, and Miracles of St. Arsenios of Paros** *(four editions)*
4) **Life and Service of St. Theoktiste**
5) **A Great and Wondrous Pilgrimage in Palestine and Sinai** *(four editions)*
6) **The Wayfarer** *(eleven editions)*
7) **Morality** *(two editions)*
8) **The Sacred War Against Blasphemy**
9) **Comments on the Calendar**
10) **The Pre-Synodal Conference on the Holy Mountain** *(a refutation of its program)*
11) **Account of the Proceedings of the Monastery During the Occupation**

12) **The Delusions of Makrakis Refuted by the Truth**
13) **A Vigilant and Salutary Trumpet-Call**
14) **Spiritual Testament**
15) **Third Trumpet-Call**
16) **The Approaching Glaive**
17) **A Critical Analysis of Heterodox Teachings**
18) **A Most Fervent Prayer**

Unpublished

1) **A Well of Divine Treasures** (in three volumes, on virtues, wickedness, etc. ; each volume consists of approximately 800 pages).
2) **Eclogion,** selected compunctious and edifying writings
3) **Ecclesiastical Sermons,** festal, encomiastic
4) **Epistles,** exhortative, admonitory, advisory, didactical, directed at Kings, Prime Ministers, Patriarchs, Hierarchs, Confessor Priests, Monks, men, women, old and young (*five thousand copies of two thousand letters have been preserved*).

Music

1) **Eclogion** (lost)
2) **The Spiritual Harp** (in two volumes)

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